



2004 School Fruit and Vegetable Procurement Report Summary

Purpose: To assess fruit and vegetable procurement practices in school foodservice. Data was collected on the amount of fruit and vegetables obtained through the federal commodity program and all other sources.

Survey Administration: The survey was mailed to a geographically representative group of 481 school districts around the nation in August 2004. The survey referred to the 2003-2004 school year. A total of 164 districts responded (34.1%).

Major Findings:

- ✓ Districts obtain far more fruits and vegetables from the open market than the federal commodity program, in some cases even ten times greater.
- ✓ Fresh produce is much more commonly purchased through the open market, whereas canned fruits and vegetables are obtained much more often through the federal commodity program.
- ✓ Fruits and vegetables are offered in a variety of venues, and are not limited to the traditional meal programs. Venues include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, After School Snack Program, salad bars and a la carte service lines. The majority report offering 100% juice through vending machines, particularly high schools.
- ✓ Three major issues impact districts directors' decision to order more fruit and vegetables:
 - ▶ Increase in student demand/preferences
 - ▶ Increase in amount of reimbursable funding
 - ▶ Decrease in cost
- ✓ A majority of respondents offer salad bar service (53%) in at least one school in their district; of these, nearly all offer the service every day of the week.
- ✓ Almost half of the directors (44.6%) report that their district participates in the DOD Fresh Program, with apples and oranges the most common fruit ordered, and carrots and lettuce the most common vegetables ordered.